TAFT TALK

No. 57 *Newsletter of the Taft Family Association* Dec 2009

Mabel Catherine (Taft) and James Merritt Neiss, great-grandparents of Roland D. Neiss, Jr. Photo taken about the time of their wedding in 1905.

"Greetings from East Africa (Tanzania)"

That was a recent salutation from one of our newest members, Roland D. Neiss, Jr.

Roland is a member of the U. S. Foreign Service, U. S. Department of State, who was stationed in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, when he first communicated with us. Since then he has assumed a new post in Nassau, the Bahamas where he says he is "looking forward to getting a little closer to home after nearly 9 years on the African continent."

For more on Mabel Catherine (Taft) and James Merritt Neiss and her relatives see p. 3.

We have made progress

We welcome both Sally Gagne and Wendy Cadieux to our executive committee. As usual both are very busy people (aren't those the best kind of people to have on your team!) but they have expressed great enthusiasm and are eager to get involved. We hope to have a Reunion in a couple years (your comments indicate that this Reunion was definitely missed). In addition we will probably put a survey together for the next newsletter to get a better idea of what direction you think the Taft Family Association should take. We still need more fresh input, so please join us as a volunteer.

Let me introduce the two new members of the Board of the Taft Family Association –
we are very excited to have them on board:

Sally Gagne

I am Sally Gagne, a tenth generation descendant of Robert (Benjamin, Stephen, Silas, Dan, Mercy, Delia, Helen, Robert) Taft. I'm a retired biology teacher living in Silver Spring, MD. My time goes into whichever interest catches my attention at the moment: natural history, invasive plants, other environmental problems, and family history.

Fifteen years ago I attended a Taft Family Reunion, at which Dick Messinger invited me to show slides of Tafts and their spouses, letting the audience guess which member of each pair had the Taft genes.

The reason I look forward to becoming active on the Board is that I was once a complete outsider who didn't know ANY forebears before 1850, and the Taft Association helped me get my bearings. I think it was Mildred Goss who welcomed me into her kitchen when I stopped at a roadside stand for apples - her apples, it turned out. Neil Todd showed me around the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

Once Pat introduces Board members to each other, I especially hope to understand what it would take to complete our genealogy. Also, I'd like to see us weigh the pros and cons of putting the Newsletter online. Perhaps there are short-term jobs that could be listed for interested members.

I realized this week that I could enroll my forty-something children in the Association as a season's gift. That should spark some interest in their lineage!

A big wave of the hat to all my cousins.

Wendy Cadieux

I have been a paralegal in NH for the last 14 years. I am from the "other" Taft branch (the Upton Tafts, i.e. the Matthew line) and have spent a few years researching that branch and it's affiliated lines. I have twin 26 year old sons and a 4 year old granddaughter. My own lineage is dually descended from the Upton Tafts. My first line is Matthew (John, Ephraim, Fisher, Orlando, Ernest Raymond, Ernest Raymond, Jr, Diane) Taft. My second is Matthew (Robert, Solomon, Salley, Fisher, Orlando, Ernest Raymond, Ernest Raymond, Jr., Diane) Taft.

I enjoy traveling, graveyard hunts, libraries, genealogy, scrap-booking, photography and cribbage. I live in Nashua, NH and I'm looking forward to helping out the Association and perhaps getting to meet some long lost cousins!

So you see we have found some great cousins to join our efforts. Thank you. And while I am thanking people, many warm thoughts to all of you for your patience. I expect you wondered if we had received your dues, it took so long to get your checks back. It turned out the transfer of treasurer-hood along with banks was much more involved than we realized – the rules have changed in the last 135 years. But we are back in business.

Greetings (Continued from page 1)

Mabel Catherine Taft, great-grandmother of Roland D. Neiss, Jr., married 1 Mar 1905 in Rome, NY James Merritt Neiss. She was born in Rome, NY on 13 Jun 1888, the daughter of Joseph Willard and Theresa (Schneible) Taft and the granddaughter of Delos Taft. Mabel Catherine died at the very young age of 30 on 27 Oct 1918 in Rome, NY, shortly after the birth of their daughter, Marguerite Cora Neiss. James Merritt and Mabel Catherine (Taft) Neiss had seven children.

Mabel Catherine Taft

Just as Mabel Catherine Taft died young, so did her grandfather's parents. Roland Neiss gives us more information:

"After the death of their parents [Oliver Lathrop and Betsey Lynn (Walker) Taft], Delos and his brother and two sisters (Julia and Frances) were placed under the guardianship of Oliver's cousin, Silas Taft and his wife Mary Ann Walker. We suspect that Mary Ann Walker was related to Delos' mother, Betsey Lynn Walker, because Julia's guardianship paperwork mentions Alvin Walker as her maternal grandfather. Alvin Walker was known to have a daughter by the name of Mary (Walker) Taft Coppins Stone. Unfortunately Silas Taft died in 1848, and Delos' younger siblings were placed under the guardianship of Alanson Taft, Oliver's youngest brother. Mary A. (Walker) Taft then married Richard Coppins. Delos and his brother, Leonard Taft, went west to Wisconsin with other relatives around 1849 and stayed there a year before returning to New York State (they are listed together in the 1850 census in WI). Delos decided to remain in New York state, where he married Cornelia Crofoot in Aug 1852. Leonard returned to Wisconsin and remained there until his death in 1908 (except for his years in the army during the Civil War – Company A, 30th WI Infantry)."

Roland D. Neiss, Jr. is the son of Roland David and Sandra Louise (Georgia) Neiss; Charles Delos and Alice Marion (Sarsfield) Neiss; James Merritt and Mabel Catherine (Taft) Neiss; Joseph Willard (Delos, Oliver Lathrop, Dan, Silas, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

Word from one of our Texas Taft families:

Ray Taft of Bacliff, TX writes that they are well. They have 5 children (one son, 4 daughters) and 5 grandchildren, his fifth child is a high school senior this year. The other four all work and have their own homes. Ray and his wife, Fran, routinely watch two of their grandchildren while their son is at work.

"Here in our area of TX the economy is not so bad because of the rebuilding efforts due to Hurricane Ike's damage which came ashore on the coastal areas of Galveston Co and went up the Bay. The Gulf coastal areas received tremendous storm surge damage from Ike and have not yet fully recovered. Bacliff is on the mainland in Galveston. It is on the high ground on the western shore of Galveston Bay and was spared severe flood damage. Only those homes in the immediate coast in Bacliff got flooded. Our house and fence did not suffer any damage even though we are about 1 mile from Galveston Bay. Our shrubs were destroyed by wind and our oak tree in the front yard was pushed over at an angle towards our house, but did not hit it. The tree was only a few years old. We replaced some of the shrubs and an arborist successfully put our tree back to the vertical and it is doing great."

"We hope for the best for our Taft 'cousins' throughout the US. If it was possible for us to escape from Ike's wrath, perhaps our 'cousins' can escape from any harm due to the current economic recession. And if not, we pray they can recover quickly!"

Thank you, Ray, and may your family have similar good fortune in the years to come.

Our cousins wonder about Benjamin E. Taft and his first wife Lucretia McIntyre

Maxine Postman of Grand Rapids, MI wishes us well in our search for board members. Her line goes back to Benjamin E. Taft and his first wife Lucretia McIntyre. Lucretia McIntyre was born about 1794 or so probably in New York, married Benjamin E. Taft about 1815 in NY, and died between 1827 and 1833 in NY.

Of course Benjamin E. Taft himself remains a question mark. He is considered a probable son of Benjamin and Thankful (Washburn) Taft of VT, but no documentation has been found, only statements made by his son Reuben that "His father, a native of Taftstown, VT, was a shoemaker and farmer. He took part in the war of 1812 in the American army, and was engaged at the battles of Plattsburg and Aquania (? Aquia) Creek. About 1828 he moved to OH ..." Another son, Alanson, stated that "his mother, Lucretia (McIntyre) Taft died in New York state, and his father consequently married Deborah Vial."

Two of the sons of Benajmin E. Taft were Reuben Edward (above) and Seymour (right). Photos taken in 1870s in Titusville, PA . Source: David W. Taft on www.3.familyoldphotos.com

Anybody have an answer, or two?

If you do, it may also help our own David W. Taft. He is in the same family line and has done extensive research as well as provided family photos.

With a cautionary note....

Several online sources indicate that our Lucretia McIntyre was the daughter of Stephen and Saloma McIntyre of Plattsburg, NY. This Stephen McIntyre apparently was born 16 May 1773 in Manchester, VT, the son of Richard and Hannah (Boorn) McIntyre, and died 18 Feb 1839 in West Plattsburg, NY. He married first Naomi (--) and had a son Joseph born in Plattsburg. He married second Saloma (--) apparently born 25 Nov 1776 and died 3 Mar 1844. Lucretia is listed as their first child born about 1794 in NY with four other children born in Plattsburg, NY, the last three with specific dates. Obviously we don't go by online trees, but perhaps this is a clue.
(Source: trees.ancestry.com)

Happy Birthday Cousin!

Floyd T. Taft, no stranger to TTT, celebrated his 80th birthday this past June. Floyd lives in Carrying Place, Ontario, CAN, and is no stranger to TTT. It would be great to hear more about our Canadian cousins!

Floyd Taft is the son of Thomas Asa (David Humphrey, Donald, Alpheus, Daniel, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

Cousin Frank D. Barber is looking for you...

He would like to converse with other cousins of his age (a young 86). But we bet you don't have to be that magic number. His address is 32342 Loomis Dr., Farmington, MI 48336.

Frank is the son of Clarence E. Barber; Frank Demont Barber; William Dennison and Henrietta (Taft) Barber; Henry (1801-1867) and Elizabeth "Betsey" (Tickner) Taft; Job (Silas, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

We would love to hear from you – photos, stories, you name it, we are interested. And better yet how about writing an article for this newsletter – no financial reward but lots of good will!

Is this your Henry Taft?

Jennifer Warren wrote she was "going through an old photo book from my mother's family. In it there was a photo of a very handsome man by the name of Henry Taft, son of Aaron, taken by Geo. H. Johnson's Pioneer Gallery at 645 & 649 Clay, St., San Francisco, CA. There is no Henry Taft in my direct line."

Looking in the California censuses we find in 1860: D H Taft ae 36 (b c 1824 MA) Granite, Sacramento Co. In 1870 he is listed as D H b c 1824 MA/MA/MA with his wife Annie G and daughter Lotta H in San Francisco; also David Henry ae 45 (b c 1825 MA), blacksmith, in Indian, Plumas Co and Henry ae 24 (b c 1846 NY), merchant, in Petaluma, Sonoma Co with his wife Fannie . In 1880 Henry C. (b c 1846 NY/VT/VT) is found in Oakland, Alameda with his wife Elizebeth and children, Max and Clara.

Research shows that Geo. H. Johnson's Pioneer Gallery was located at that address from 1862 to 1863, by 1864 he had reverted to 649 Clay St. The Henry Taft in the photo appears to be 35 to 50 years old, thus he was probably born between 1812 and 1827. Using that information and the census information (recognizing there could well have been other Henry Tafts in CA who didn't make the censuses), the best candidate would be David Henry Taft born 21 Dec 1823 in Mendon, MA, the son of Arnold and Martha Willard (Harrington) Taft, Esq. who married Annie G.. If this is the correct Henry Taft then his ancestry would be son of Arnold (Thomas, Thomas) Taft.

If this is your Henry Taft, we have the photo thanks to Jennifer Warren who wants it to find its rightful home.

The Pioneer Gallery has its own brush with infamy.

In Jan 1866 a package was sent to Superior Court Judge Stephen J. Field in Washington, DC, with a return address of the very same photo gallery where Henry Taft's photo was taken. He tore off the cover and looked inside. Not understanding what he was looking at, he asked Judge Lake what he thought. Lake picked it up and yelled, "It is a torpedo. Don't open it." They dipped the package into water and let it soak, then went out to the carriageway. Hiding behind the columns they threw the box against a wall which broke the hinge of the lid. Twelve cartridges used in a common pistol, about an inch in length, were imbedded in a paste of some kind, covered with fulminating powder, and connected with a bunch of friction matches, a strip of sandpaper and a piece of linen attached to the lid. The box of matches should have ignited when the box was opened and a large explosion would then have ensued. No more information was given in the articles to let us know if the Pioneer Gallery was actually involved or innocent.

Source: Personal Reminiscences of Early Days in California by Stephen Johnson Field, George C. Gorham; Kessinger Publishing, 2006 pp. 146-149.

Harvard University Graduates from 1636-1900

The Quinquennial Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Harvard 1636-1900 includes the following Taft graduates:

Year	Student	Parents	Br*	Information
1751	Moses	Rev. Moses (1722-1792) s/o Eleazer (1697)	T	Ordained Pastor of the church in Randolph; successor to Rev. Elisha Eaton 1752, continued in ministry until his death
1774	Moses	Moses, MD (1754-1799) s/o Rev. Moses (1722)	T	Physician in Sudbury, MA
1783	Eleazar	Rev. Eleazar (1755-1834) s/o Rev. Moses (1722)	T	Theologian; Preceptor of high school in Portmsouth, NH; Served in Revolutionary War, Priv & Sgt.
1783	Joseph	Joseph, MD (1756-1824) s/o Rev. Moses (1722)	T	Physician in Weston, MA
1789	Phineas	Phineas (1762-1798) s/o Rev. Moses (1722)	T	Theologian, called to Ashby, MA but died before ordination
1804	Bezaleel	Bezaleel, Esq. (1780-1846) s/o Bezaleel, Esq. (1750)	D	Harvard University & Harvard Law School; State Senator and Representative to Mass. General Court; State Executive Council.
1870	Stephen Swift	Stephen Swift, Esq. (1848-1916) s/o Velorous (1819)	R	Lawyer; Mass. State Legislator; Republican
1876d	Ezra Fletcher	Ezra Fletcher (1846-1930+) s/o Ezra Wood (1800)	R	Dentist; Delta Kappa Epsilon; class officer; Amherst College 1867; office in Boston; instructor in operative dentistry Harvard Dental School 1892-1903
1881r	Charles Hutchins	Charles Hutchins, DMD (1856-1930+) s/o Charles Preston (1823)	R	Homeopathic Dental Surgeon; instructor in Cambridge and Chicago; class officer
1886m	Charles Ezra	Charles Ezra, MD (1863-1922) s/o Josephus Guild (1831)	R	Physician in Hartford, CT; House physican at Boston City Hospital, then Woman's Hospital in NYC; Medical Inspector on NY Board of Health; Asst. Surgeon of 1st Regt, CT Vol. Militia
1894d	George Lund	George Lund (1859-1918) s/o Charles Preston (1823)	R	Dentist in Cambridge, MA; Theta Delta Chi; Boston University, Ph. B. 1884, A.B. 1885; 1885-90 instructor in Western NY Institute of Deaf-Mutes
1898	Stephen Swift	Stephen Swift, Esq. (1876-) s/o Stephen Swift, Esq. (1848)	R	Lawyer in Springfield, MA

*Note: Br indicates which son of Robert this individual descends from: T = Thomas, D = Daniel, and R = Robert.
Source: Quinquennial Catalogue of Harvard 1636-1900 by Adamont Media, 2001; New England Historic Genealogical Record 3.311; Wikipedia

Please note that if your label reads 2005-06, you will no longer receive this newsletter. Please contact our treasurer right away, so you don't miss the next newsletter this fall. If your year is 2012 or later, don't send any more in at this time. Thank you.

Spotlight on Taft, OK

Taft, Mucogee, OK, originally known as Twine, I.T. (Indian Territory) was renamed in 1904 in honor of then Secretary of War William Howard Taft, and is a Creek Nation black town. It is one of the few black towns remaining. The current population is 609 which is up almost 75% since 2000 and comprises 1.5 square miles near Tulsa, OK. Nearby is the Taft Institution Lake or Reservoir as well as Taft Lakes 1, 2 and 3. In 1989 Taft elected Lelia Foley-Davis, the first female African American mayor in the US. Taft is home to the Creek Freedmen Shrine and African American landmark built by Napoleon Davis as a memorial to the history of the 5000 African Americans who lived in the Creek Nation. Taft City Hall is listed on the Natl. Register of Historic Places, The Reeder Walker House and St. Paul Baptist Church are listed in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory. Additionally Taft was the home of the Halochee Institute, the W. T. Vernon School, the Industrial Institute for the Deaf, Blind, and Orphans of the Colored Race and the State Hospital for the Negro Insane. The state later placed two state penitentiaries in Taft, one for men and one for women.

All-Black Towns of Oklahoma

Nowhere else in the United States did so many African Americans come together to create and govern their own communities. From 1865-1920 there were 50 settlements, with 13 still in existence. These towns developed in Indian Territory after the Civil War when the former slaves of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole nations) settled together for mutual protection and economic security. When the US government required American Indians to accept individual land allotments, most Indian "freemen" chose land next to other African Americans.

When the Land Run of 1889 opened more "free land" to non-Indian settlement, African Americans from the Old South migrated to Oklahoma, considering it a kind of "promised land." Some eaders hoped to establish an African American power block in the territory and some hoped for an All-Black State.

After the passage of many Jim Crow laws by the OK legislature, many settlers became disillusioned and a large contingent relocated to the western plains of Canada. Another group joined the "Back to Africa" movement in the early 20th century. Since these towns were predominantly small agricultural centers, the fate of cotton and other crops during the Great Depression also forced residents to move.

Taft is one of the few original All-Black towns to survive and prosper. At the turn of the century Taft housed three general stores, a drugstore, a brickyard, a soda pop factory, a livery stable, a gristmill, a lumberyard, two hotels, a restaurant, a bank and a funeral home.

Sources: www.african-nativeamerican.com ; OK Historical Society website

Taft faculty; source: OK Historical Society

Believe it or not... Taft, OK Ghost Tales

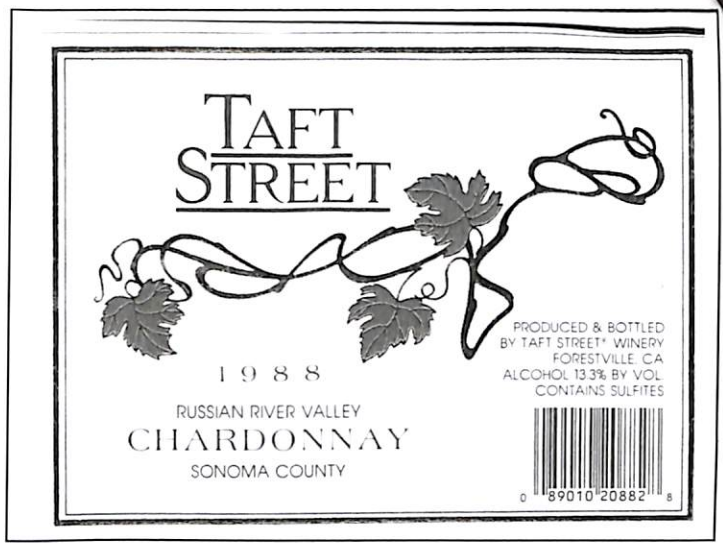
"During the daylight hours the locals go about their lives as anyone else would, but this city has chilling riddles obscured in the darkness. Ghosts are so average here; loads of residents don't even worry about it anymore." Some of the sightings include:

- The ghost of a man dressed as a gardener emerged eating a tomato near the waterfront at Taft Institution Lake.
- A lady with a somewhat translucent body watches from the highest spot of Baucum Hill at the stroke of midnight. When seen she approached the viewer who then escaped.
- A frequent visitor is a gentleman wearing a sheriff's uniform who is seen at the Coburn Lake Dam around midnight.
- An elderly man with a long white beard was reading a pamphlet near Ash Creek;
- and a soldier is regularly seen near Chocks Bottom after midnight.

Source: www.ghosts ofamerica.com/7/Oklahoma

Taft Street Winery – Garagistes since 1979

The Taft Street Winery of Sonoma County, CA began in a garage on Taft Street, Oakland, CA. by two brothers who were students at Berkeley. Both were cooking part-time in restaurants, but took courses and worked in wineries. As they say, since the garage wasn't large enough for a car, they built a winery (sounds like a 60s rock group – not far off). The BATF came calling and were convinced that at least five families were making wine only for themselves, which satisfied the agency.



Keeping the name of its birthplace the Winery moved to Sonoma County where they harvested about 1700 cases of Chardonnay and Cabernet/Merlot in 1982. By 1990 they were selling 20,000 cases a year including a wide variety of whites, reds and roses, to markets, restaurants, in-store, and online. Taft Street Winery produces limited production quantities of wine, grapes coming from the local vineyards in the Russian River Valley, Dry Creek and Alexander Valleys.

East Smithfield (RI) Library Seeking Volunteers

The East Smithfield Public Library located on Esmond Street, Smithfield, RI, has received the Doris Pennell Mowry collection, and needs a few web-savvy volunteers to help manage its contents. The library feels that the core materials of this collection are its genealogical resources - books and manuscripts. However, there are also histories, biographies and fiction that add no relevance to the genealogical materials. It has been suggested that other libraries, or even individuals, may want these publications, and thus someone needs to search the internet to find good homes for these books. (E-bay sales would be a last resort, but any monies gained from such sales would be used to repair and rebind some of the genealogical volumes.) Once the collection is catalogued and organized, library patrons will be able to research family history, thanks to the generosity of Doris Pennell Mowry, a former WAC and schoolteacher in the building which houses the East Smithfield Public Library. Volunteers who would like to help with researching the collection's assets via the internet are asked to call 231-5051 and speak to the Director, Ms. Elodie Blackmore.

RIGS Needs Irons Family Information

On a note of inquiry, does anyone know anything about Clara Taft Irons (1854-1885), who is buried in the Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Millville, NA?

The Rhode Island Genealogical Society began a project on the Irons family several years ago, and is trying to tie up some loose ends so that this information may be published in book form.

Who were Clara's parents, and where did she/they live? Any help you can lend to this effort will be greatly appreciated. You may contact: Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Clarke, 217 School St., North Kingstown, RI 02852.

We may have the answer,. According to our database, Clara L. Taft was born in 1854 in Douglas, Worcester, MA, the daughter of Benjamin Franklin and Mary Jane (Spring) Taft and married 20 Mar 1877 in Blackstone, Worcester, MA Charles M. Irons. He was born in Willington, CT, the son of Francis D. and Urania H. Irons (VRMA 291.218).

Benjamin Franklin Taft was the son of Caleb (Japhet, Japhet, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

Nathan Taft and his two marriages reconnected

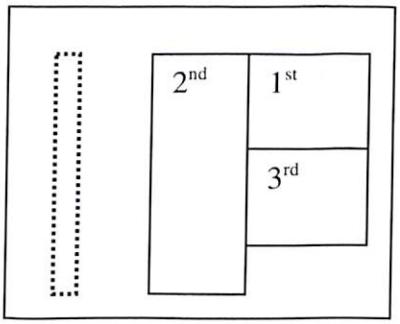
Denice Mitchell who is vice-president of the Burrillville Historical and Preservation Society and helping to organize a collection recently left to the local library, announced a new cousin, her grandson, Ronan Everett Still, who was born 8 Apr 2008. He is "beginning to walk, and is very self-assured – he never holds onto anything to steady himself. A Sweet-tempered child," she adds. Denice also misses the Reunion and hopes there will be another one soon.

Denice descends from Benjamin (Robert) Taft through three lines: 1) his son Mijamin's daughter Molly (Taft) Paine; 2) his son Nathan and Sarah (Cooper) Taft's son Moses (Elisha, Esek, Rebecca Ellen m Samuel Edwin Mowry); and 3) again his son Nathan and Ruth (Cruff) Taft's son Jesse's daughter Martha who married Simon Richardson.

"The two lines rejoin with my grandparents' marriage. My grandfather had a few other girlfriends, apparently, but none that he was as sweet on as my grandmother, Eunice Richardson. Among my grandmother's collection of postcards are quite a few with romantic themes/scenes, and almost all of them are from my grandfather, addressing her always as "Dear E" or "'Dearest E" and signing himself as "Your loving E". Apparently, they got a kick out of the fact that they had the same first initial. One or two of these cards are written in shorthand, so there were a few things they wanted to keep between themselves.

"My grandmother, Eunice (Richardson) Mitchell, died in 1928 from the effects of an enlarged thyroid.... She was not quite 37. She was born 9 August 1891 on the family farm in the Ironstone section of Uxbridge, MA and died 21 July 1928 at the RI Homeopathic Hospital (now Roger Williams Hospital) in Providence, RI. This left my grandfather to raise his two sons, ages 15 and 9, alone. My grandmother was valedictorian of her class at Uxbridge High School.... Though an avid scholar, my grandmother was often kept from school by inclement weather -if she couldn't get a ride or ride her bicycle, she couldn't attend classes, thus delaying her graduation date. I have since learned that Dexter Richardson, my grandmother's great uncle (whose mother was Molly (Taft) Paine seems to have died at about age 37 - the "magic age" for the final / severe symptoms of thyroid problems.

"My grandfather, William Everett Mitchell, was born 14 May 1891 in Harrisville, RI on his parents' farm. My grandfather attended Burrillville schools and then went to Hill College in Woonsocket. While [there, he] stayed at the YMCA on Federal Street; thus his "commute" was but a few minutes' walk up Main Street. After his business college training, he went to work as a bookkeeper at the Stillwater Mill in Harrisville, and worked there until the Depression caused him... to lose his job. From then on, my grandfather worked on the farm, eking out a living from his several dairy cows and 20-or-so chickens, as well as the annual pig and one goat. (My father told us of the time that the bull and the goat vied for control of the farm "territory' - when they charged at each other, the impact broke the bull's neck! Goat's necks and skulls are designed to withstand head-butts; bulls merely "lock horns' - but no one had told the old goat about this, and so my grandfather, father and uncle had BEEF for the smokehouse for quite some time!



The first section was originally a one-room schoolhouse with attic from Douglas; the second section was a two-room schoolhouse; and the third section , containing the kitchen, was built in the early 1930s. The house is separated from Sherman Farm Rd. by a stone wall.

"My grandfather was an active member of the Rhode Island Oldtime Fiddlers' Association throughout his lifetime (his mother was quite a good stepdancer in her day, and her brother Henry was a much-requested fiddler in the Burrillville-Glocester-Douglas-Uxbridge area; they attended all the fiddling events, as did my grandfather from a young age). My grandfather was a charter member of the Burrillville Historical and Preservation Society. Because his mother's family were Mowrys, they always attended the annual Mowry Family Reunions, which began in 1926. (It's possible that they went to the Taft Reunions...). My grandfather enjoyed good health until his eighties, when he developed prostate cancer. True to his generation, he rarely went to doctors, and thus his condition wasn't discovered until it had spread and was irreversible. We lost him on 20 February 1975. Until a few days before his death, "Pa" read the newspaper and did the daily crossword. He was always curious, loved to travel, and meticulously described people and places on the photos that he took, thus easing this genealogist's burden of identifying these images. My grandparents had two sons: my father, Stephen W. Mitchell, Sr., continues to thrive at age 96, due to my sister Kathleen's excellent care; his brother Homer Everett Mitchell passed away in 1999 from leukemia. "

Taft Family Association Officers

President: still searching
Vice President & Genealogist: Neil B. Todd, 26 Walnut Place, Newtonville, MA 02460 neilbtodd@cs.com
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Annual dues of $8 per family are due and payable each year on or before June 1, 2006.
(Your dues are paid through the year on your mailing label.)